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AUTHOR Taylor, D. Reginald
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ABSTRACT

Upper-level universities (offering only junior, senior, and graduate programs) have been developed in the last ten years and are relatively small in size. The faculty and administration have been drawn from traditional university experiences. This paper examines two characteristics commonly held by all universities: the practice of university governance and the concept of faculty tenure. While it is conceded that governance truly rests in the Board of Regents, disagreement occurs in the discussion of the formalized process of governance. An examination of the basis of faculty tenure shows that it is awarded in recognition of promising scholarship, teaching, and research and designed to allow the scholar to proceed with his investigation without being fettered with concerns arising from loss of job and salary unless unusual charges could be established against him. Upper-level institutions have an opportunity to practice general governance, blurring distinction between faculty and administration. Administrative activities can be justified as tenurable for faculty. (JMF)

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ENIGMAS OF UPPER LEVEL UNIVERSITIES:

UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE AND FACULTY TENURE

For the new upper level universities, two policy decisions stand out as being fundamental to the nature of the institution. Unlike most institutions of higher education, the new upper level institutions (offering only junior, senior, and graduate programs) are all of tender age, the oldest being less than ten years old and the majority being less than five years old. Most are quite small, numbering students in the hundreds or, for even the largest, in the low thousands.

Though these new institutions usually were created to satisfy certain student populations without the costly duplication of the physical plants of junior colleges, it generally was agreed that these new types of institutions should provide a place for evaluation of ideas, techniques, and programs which have difficulty surfacing in the halls of the more established, tradition-bound institution. It was, and is, hoped that benefit of the experiences of upper level universities will accrue to the "traditional" institutions. However, faculty come from "traditional" universities, accreditation teams are accustomed to "traditional" universities, and administrative patterns are being developed by administrators who found they were themselves developed at "traditional" universities. Suddenly, and almost naturally, upper level institutions find themselves modeled after one, or several, very well established universities.

While this is not altogether bad, it does allow, by easy osmosis, the casual ignoring of some issues and questions which could be substantially addressed in the setting of upper level universities.

This paper is devoted to the examination of two characteristics commonly held by all universities: The practice of university governance and the concept of faculty tenure. At issue immediately is the question of "who governs?" While nearly all concede quickly that governance truly rests in the Board of Regents, agreement quickly separates among those who attempt to formalize the processes of university governance in today's universities. It seems clear that a fundamental difference, as to who governs, exists between those who favor "faculty" governance and those who favor some other practice.

It is at this point those who seek "faculty" governance, or governance by faculty, subscribe to a philosophy that offers several surprising ramifications. If, for a moment, we were to assume that the faculty, taken collectively, really are of what the university consists, then the other resources such as buildings and books are provided as necessary support to enhance and sustain the meeting of faculty and student. The administration is to provide that which is needed to make most advantageous the meeting between faculty and student. Administration, if appropriately active, is to implement policy developed by the faculty and approved by the governing board. Moreover, certain management and official reporting is necessary and certain non-faculty functions fall to the administrator.

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Though the theory may seem sound, casual observance of existing institutions suggests another mode of operation is that which is practiced. For instance, recently a President has been dismissed at the University of Texas; the Faculty Senate met in august fashion to "deplore" the action. In actions of less concern, such as parking fees, graduation procedures, admission policies, and many others, recent years have offered one example after another of university (faculty) senates meeting to "deplore" action taken by University administration.

Now how is it to be in these new upper level institutions? These are the institutions whose faculty come primarily from an experience that suggests (i) faculty are to teach, research, and committee, with a reduced teaching load resulting from successfully participating in the latter two, (ii) faculty senates generally are ineffectual groups, initiating little, "deploring" much, and contributing little.

Administrators, in the experience of both upper level institution faculty and administration, surprise no one if they function as do administrators of established institutions. Indeed, arguments can be mounted that suggest new institutions demand strong leadership. Somehow leadership and administration nearly always are identified as one; hardly ever is the faculty looked to for leadership.

To focus the issues of university governance and faculty tenure, let us first examine the basis of faculty tenure; that is, for what is it granted? It seems rather universally agreed that tenure is a condition which can develop into an affliction; however, it is awarded in recognition of promising scholarship, teaching, and research and designed to allow the scholar to proceed with his investigation without being fettered with concerns arising from loss of job and salary unless unusual charges could be established against him. One such charge is that of incompetency.

There exist those who earn, or are awarded, faculty tenure on the basis of success in teaching, research, and university service. In the established institution, the order is often research, teaching, and university service, perhaps because research is more easily evaluated than teaching and university service is often hardly more than a negligible influence. However awarded, it always is a sad time in those instances that a tenured faculty member "goes inactive." So many, either by loss of interest, diversion elsewhere, or for other reasons, simply cease those activities for which they were granted tenure. Though many deteriorate to just "meeting class" some do so flagrantly, by selling insurance on the side, or by almost retiring though still meeting classes adequately. Those who take up other activities, clearly identified as non-faculty activities, perhaps are despised the most by the faculty in general. Those who clearly consult "too much" or allow non-faculty activities to consume openly extreme amounts of their time thereby effectively discard the academic mantle.

Consider the faculty member who is invited into an administrative role. He, as clearly as the faculty member who becomes an insurance agent on the side, has forsaken dedication to those activities on which tenure is to be, or was,

granted. These activities, of an administrative nature, if continued too long, can send the faculty member who becomes an administrator back to his academic division years later as an academic cripple, neither desired nor accepted, and sometimes barely tolerated.

Obviously, it is critical as to whether administrative duties merit faculty tenure. If successful performance of administrative duties does merit faculty tenure, the issue of university governance becomes fuzzy indeed between administration and faculty. If administrative duties do not merit faculty tenure (indeed, it is almost axiomatic that performance of administrative duties destroys the capability to perform tenurable academic functions except for the most unusual and almost unique people), the lines are severely drawn between "faculty" and "others" over the question of university governance.

Upper level institutions, being small institutions, have an opportunity to practice general governance, blurring distinction between faculty and administration. To accomplish this, faculty must be convinced that typically administrative chores will be recognized as "tenurable" activities. If, however, these activities are not deemed scholarly, then faculty will be difficult to convince that much positive attention should be directed toward them. Administrators will be left to "administer" and faculty left to "faculty things" just as normal traditional universities perform.

While tenure generally is considered to be of life-long duration, it perhaps is possible that a basis for discontinuance of tenure is the willing acceptance by an individual of assignments which are clearly at a cost of the practice of those activities for which tenure is granted. If administration, in today's universities, amounts to a collection of duties for which tenure is not to be granted, then the logical conclusion which follows is that performance of administrative duties should come, after a time, at a cost of faculty tenure.

It seems reasonable to predict that upper level universities will reflect the behavior of established universities. That is, administrators will have gained tenure as faculty and continue to hold it as administrators, or else gain tenure as administrators for the performance of assignments which clearly are not scholarly or acceptable as a basis for tenure. Should this occur, faculty tenure will be for upper level about as it is for established institutions.

However, two other options are available, dealing at once with both issues of faculty tenure and university governance. Administrative activities can be distinguished to a point of justifying tenure for faculty, if practiced effectively. This would allow "governance" of a modern university to more nearly resemble that of the smaller universities which existed before 1940. Or, a faculty member, upon assuming an administrative post can, after a period of something such as five years, relinquish tenure. Possibly this person's function as an administrator then might be judged on the basis of how effectively he implemented policy developed by faculty. Or, such an administration might attempt to be quite dictatorial and self-perpetuating. In any case, upper level institutions do have the opportunity to evaluate the worth of a "non-tenured" administration, or a faculty which can gain tenure for

administrative duties and chores. Perhaps even the most established institutions can learn from the experience of these new breeds, the upper level universities.

D. Reginald Traylor, Chancellor
University of Houston Victoria Campus
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